2022-2024
Strategic Plan

Helping People, Changing Lives

Yadkin Valley Economic Development District, Inc.

Intent

The intent of this document is to provide the leaders of **YVEDDI** with a strategic pathway to fulfill the organization's purpose over the next three years. Each element of the completed plan was strategically selected to remove a specific barrier identified in the Community Needs Assessment or organizational capacity evaluation, both of which were completed in conjunction with this document. These strategies will be extrapolated in a series of action plans that will allow the organization to monitor progress on an ongoing basis so that adjustments can be made, as necessary, to achieve ultimate success.

The document was created by the organization's Strategic Planning Committee under the consultation of Shawn Howell, a Nationally Certified Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Master Trainer, and approved by the governing body.

The process included a comprehensive review of the organization's governing documents and the most recently completed Community Needs Assessment, risk assessment, organizational standards evaluation, and financial audit. Surveys were also distributed to community partners, local citizens, staff members, and the Board of Directors in an effort to obtain a comprehensive view of the organization's current state from a variety of perspectives.

The final planning session included a presentation of community needs and the current state of the organization. The committee reviewed the organization's mission to ensure it appropriately communicated the agency's purpose and that all activities were in alignment with its message. Goals, outcomes, and strategies were selected in response to prioritized needs. Data included in the final report were presented to the governing body and approved by a majority vote. A summary of the plan's contents can be found on page 2.

Board of Directors

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- Eddie Harris, Vice-Chairman
- Sylvia Jessup, Secretary
- James Brown, Treasurer
- Mike Crouse, Chaplain
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- Kelley Crain, Board Member
- Kathy Payne, Executive Director
- Rhonda Wrenn, Head Start Director
- Bristol Mitchem, Resource Center Manager
- Lisa Money, Senior Services Director
- Chris Fowler, Finance Director
- Dawn Cheek, CSBG Administrative Assistant
- Jeff Cockerham, Transportation Director
- Madison Wright, DV/SA Director

01

Introduction

Welcome to our 2022 Strategic Plan!

The Problem

An estimated 29,546 individuals are living in poverty throughout the area served by YVEDDI

The Mission

Dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families in Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties through a variety of programs and partnerships to build stronger communities

The Vision

A united community with adequate resources where people can meet their basic needs and live successful lives

The Plan

01 **Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security (Family Level)**

- **Community Services Program:** *Individuals obtain a living wage equivalent*
- **Head Start:** *Children are ready for school*
- **Migrant Head Start:** *Migrant children are ready for school*
- **Transportation Program:** *Individuals obtain transportation*
- **Weatherization Program:** *Individuals experience an improvement in the health and safety of their home*
- **Grace's Closet:** *Individuals obtain clothing*
- **Family Resource Center:** *Individuals obtain basic needs*
- **Getting Ahead:** *Youth obtain the skills necessary to secure employment as adults*

02 **Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment (Family Level)**

- **Domestic Violence Program:** *Individuals escape an unsafe environment*
- **Sexual Assault Program:** *Individuals escape an unsafe environment*
- **Senior Services Program:** *Seniors maintain independent living*

03 **Communities where people live are healthy and offer economic opportunity (Community Level)**

- **Weatherization Initiative:** *The condition of the community's housing units is improved*
- **Transportation Initiative:** *The community improves its transportation infrastructure*

04 **The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security (Agency Level)**

- **Board Development Initiative:** *The agency experiences an increase in board engagement*
- **Staff Retention Initiative:** *The organization experiences an increase in staff retention*
- **Agency-Wide Data Consolidation Initiative:** *The organization is able to produce agency-wide unduplicated data*

Values:

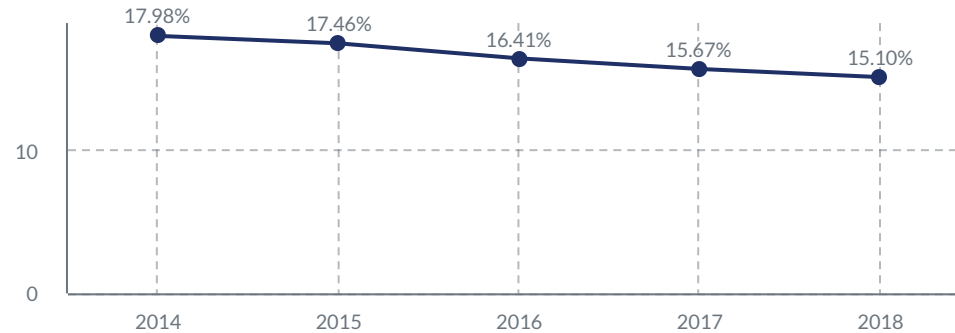*Compassion, Integrity, Respect
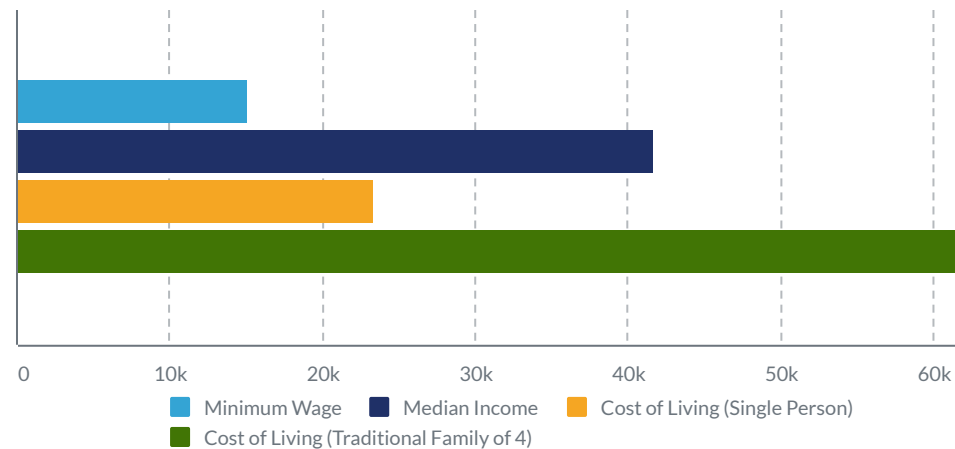Experience, Commitment, Teamwork*

The Problem: Poverty

An estimated **29,546** individuals in **8,946** households were identified as living in poverty throughout the region served by the organization. Although not officially recognized as living in poverty, data indicates that an additional **45,805** households do not have adequate resources to secure their basic needs. Overall, an estimated 57% of all community residents lack a living wage equivalent.

Five-Year Poverty Trend

- 17.98% (2014)
- 17.46% (2015)
- 16.41% (2016)
- 15.67% (2017)
- 15.10% (2018)

Income vs Cost of Living Comparison

- Minimum Wage
- Median Income
- Cost of Living (Single Person)
- Cost of Living (Traditional Family of 4)

02

The Purpose

Why does our organization exist?

All Residents
29,546
15.1%

Young Children (<5)
2,422
25.34%

School-Aged (5-17)
7,137
22.62%

Young Adults (18-34)
6,297
17.95%

Adults (35-64)
10,162
12.43%

Seniors (65+)
3,528
9.40%

3

Housing	Nutrition	Physical Health	Mental Health
21,889	**23,740**	**34,805**	**24,816**
households spend more than 30% of their income on housing	individuals are food insecure	adults have poor to fair health	adults have frequent mental distress

The Vision

A united community with adequate resources where people can meet their basic needs and live successful lives

The Mission

Dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families in Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties through a variety of programs and partnerships to build stronger communities

The Goals

Goal 1: Family Level (F)
Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security

Goal 2: Family Level (F)
Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment

Goal 3: Community Level (C)
Communities where people live are healthy and offer economic opportunity

Goal 4: Agency Level (A)
The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security

Values:
Compassion, Integrity, Respect
Experience, Commitment, Teamwork

YVEDDI
2022 Strategic Plan

Family/Community Level Barriers

Although other barriers were identified during the assessment of community needs, the following barriers were strategically addressed in the agency's plan:

- ### Individuals lack a living-wage equivalent income (F)

  An estimated 29,546 individuals residing in 8,946 households are considered to be living in poverty, with a regional median income ranging from $41,068 to $57,611. When compared to the region's cost of living, it is estimated that 45,805 households (57%) do not have adequate income to meet all of their basic needs. While financial management skills are important for everyone, they are necessary for survival among individuals living in poverty.

- ### Youth lack qualifications necessary to secure employment as adults (F)

  An estimated 25,555 adults in the region lack a high school education. According to the Department of Labor, these individuals are more likely to be unemployed and, those who do secure employment, generally earn lower wages. Although the current graduation rate (87.08%) is higher than the state and national averages, only 19% of all graduating seniors meet ACT benchmarks that demonstrate college readiness.

- ### Individuals do not have reliable transportation (F)

  An estimated 3,852 households in the region do not own a vehicle. This barrier limits access to employment, education, food, medical care, social interaction, and other basic needs. An additional 21,365 households were identified as having only one vehicle in the home. Of these, nearly half (9,202) had more than one family member. While these households would have access to basic necessities unless the condition of the vehicle limited access, secondary household members may face difficulties improving education/skills and securing employment.

- ### Seniors lack the ability to maintain independence (F)

  Over the past five years, the number of senior citizens (age 65+) has increased by 11.6% from 35,138 to 38,808 individuals. This migration has resulted in an increase of 4.07% in the median age during the same time period. Among these, an estimated 3,528 seniors had incomes below the nationally recognized poverty level, representing 9.4% of the senior population. These individuals often live on fixed incomes and are more likely to experience health problems, food insecurity, social isolation, and other factors that impact quality of life.

- ### Individuals reside in unsafe home environments (F)

  According to the National Coalition against Domestic Violence, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million people. In 2014, a study conducted by the University of North Carolina estimated that 2% of the state's population experiences domestic violence each year. Among these, 97% of the victims reported emotional abuse, with 71% stating that they had been physically abused, 31% reporting financial abuse, 18% reporting technological abuse, and 13% being abused sexually. A child was involved in nearly half of all situations (47.5%). In the service area, a total of 2,387 individuals reported that they had been abused during 2018, 4 of which lead to death.

02

The Barriers

What impacts our ability to fulfill the purpose?

- ## Children are not ready for school (F)

  Recent census data indicates that 2,422 young children live in poverty throughout the region served by YVEDDI. To emphasize the importance of this problem, Public Schools First, an organization that supports North Carolina Schools through information and education, explains in their publication "The Facts on Child Poverty" that a poor child born in one of the most affluent counties only has a 6% chance of moving up the income ladder by adulthood. The report continues to note that without major interventions North Carolina's child poverty rate would more than double.

  An additional study conducted by the National Center for Children in Poverty explains that future achievement of children in poverty is related to the length of time they remain in poverty during their childhood. Those who are in households that are persistently poor (at least half of the years between birth and age 17) are 13% less likely complete high school and 43% less likely to complete college than those who have only experienced poverty less than half of their childhood. These children are also 37% less likely to be consistently employed as young adults than other children which is consistent with data indicating that lower-educational achievement of under-resourced individuals and the fact that unemployment rates are historically lower among lower-educated groups.

  Among the 1,949 low-income households with young children an estimated 399 (20%) were noted as having a Hispanic ethnicity.

- ## Individuals reside in homes with health/safety concerns (F)

  The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in coordination with the U.S. Census Bureau, reports that 20,475 housing units in the service area have at least one substandard conditions with nearly half of these (9,935) having severe conditions. When compared to the number of households (79,734) and housing units in the region (92,199), it is estimated that at least 8,010 households are residing in substandard housing units.

- ## The community lacks adequate transportation resources (C)

  In 2018 the U.S. Census Bureau identified 3,852 households in the service area without a vehicle limiting access to employment, education, food, medical care, social interaction, and other basic needs. An additional 21,365 households were identified as having only one vehicle in the home. Of these nearly half (9,202) had more than one family member. While these households would have access to basic necessities unless the condition of the vehicle limited access, secondary household members may face difficulties improving education/skills and securing employment.

  For these households access to public transportation is crucial to survival. Although YVEDDI currently operates a public transportation initiative, community members participating in surveys and focus groups report that discontinuance of the program would negatively impact the community. This indicates a continuing need for the operation of this initiative.

- ## Housing units in the community have health/safety concerns (C)

  Although data indicates that there are 92,199 housing units available in the region to accommodate the 79,734 households an estimated 20,475 of these units (22.07%) were noted as having at least one substandard condition, 9,935 of which had at least one severe substandard condition. Community members explained that the greatest conditions included sagging/leaking roofs, broken windows/doors, inadequate insulation, holes in walls/ceilings/floors, missing siding, and insect/rodent infestation.

Agency Level Barriers

During the agency's SWOT analysis, a number of concerns were identified that, once addressed, would strengthen the organization's capacity to achieve results. While agency leaders felt that many of these items could be resolved independently, three barriers were addressed in the agency's plan. The entirety of the SWOT analysis results are documented on the following page.

- ## Some members of the governing body are not fully engaged (A)

    During the analysis of agency strengths and weaknesses, it was determined that some members of the organization's governing body were not fully engaged in the duties and responsibilities generally associated with the position. Although attendance in regularly scheduled meetings is a critical expectation of all members of a governing body, the most effective organizations are led by those who are fully engaged in all aspects of the organization's mission, strategic direction, and assessment of progress. This engagement includes not only governance, but also advocacy on behalf of the organization in an attempt to increase public support and non-federal resources.

- ## Several of the agency's programs have high staff turnover rates (A)

    The recently completed SWOT analysis found that several of the agency's programs suffered from staff shortages, at least partially attributed to a high turnover rate. Although a strong majority of the staff members participating in the research explained that they were confident in their understanding and ability to complete their required duties, many explained that they felt underpaid and had insufficient technology to do their jobs effectively.

- ## The organization is unable to produce agency-wide unduplicated data (A)

    While it is understood that the agency operates a variety of fund sources that require customer data to be tracked in separate systems, producing an unduplicated count of customers served by the entirety of an organization, as well as each program operated under its auspices, is necessary to fully understand its effectiveness. Further, guidance from the National Association of State Community Services Programs (NASCSP) clearly states the expectation of every Community Action Agency to produce unduplicated data for the CSBG Annual Report. During the most recently completed SWOT analysis, it was determined that YVEDDI does not have the capability to produce an agency-wide unduplicated count.

Strengths

- The organization is well established in the local communities served

- The organization is a part of state and national networks that allow for an increased ability to achieve success and communicate with legislators/lawmakers

- The organization operates a number of programs and services that have the ability to strategically address some of the major causes/conditions of poverty in the service area

- The organization has a tri-partite structure that allows for diverse perspectives and includes individuals with strong expertise in law, finance, education, and poverty

- The organization has a well documented process for recruitment, orientation, and removal of board members

- The governing body is supportive of the leadership team

- The organization has a clean audit with no unresolved findings

- The organization is financially stable

- The organization has proven its ability to respond quickly to unexpected circumstances

- Staff members feel confident in their understanding and ability to do their jobs

- The organization has established strategic relationships with nearly 50 partners to assist with the achievement of its mission

- Customers overwhelmingly report that they are happy with the quality of the services they receive & the way staff treat them

Weaknesses

- Some members of the governing body are not fully engaged in their basic duties/responsibilities (meeting attendance, compliance monitoring, agency advocacy, fundraising, etc.)

- The organization currently has unfilled board positions

- Some team members feel that the leadership team is not as visible as they would like

- The organization is highly dependent on federal funds

- The organization needs to build financial reserves to allow for funding disruptions of 3-6 months

- Some team members are concerned that financial obligations are not paid in a timely manner

- Team members feel that the agency needs improved technology & internet and provide more IT support/training

- Team members feel that some agency programs are understaffed. This appears to be partially associated with high turnover rates

- The organization is unable to generate an unduplicated count of the customers served & their successes across program lines

- Some staff members are not aware of the programs/activities operated by other departments

- The majority of the staff feel underpaid

- Staff feel that inter-departmental communication/coordination could be improved

- Customers feel the organization could improve advertising efforts

- The organization needs a development director to attract corporate sponsors/donors

Opportunities

- CARES funding can be used to demonstrate the true impact and necessity of the organization in the community

- Senior volunteers could be used to assist with telephones and basic customer screenings

- Local government board members can use political connections to solicit support for the organization

Threats

- CARES funding will be closely monitored, which could negatively impact future allocations

- Team members and customers are at risk of COVID-19 infection

- The COVID-19 pandemic could have a long-term negative impact on the local economy

- Many community members have negative feelings about people living in poverty

- Many members of the community are not fully aware of the work performed by the organization

- The new Administration leaves federally funded organizations with a sense of uncertainty associated with funding amounts, reporting requirements, etc.

- Consideration of Medicaid Managed Care could restrict mileage reimbursement rates

- The region's population is aging three times faster than the national average resulting in a demographic shift

Community Services Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals lack a living-wage equivalent income*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Individuals obtain a living-wage equivalent*

Estimated Success: *5 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Income Documents, Household Budget, Client Statement*

Department: *Community Services*

Verification of Need:

29,546 members of the local population (15.1%) are considered to be living in poverty based on the nationally recognized definition. Although the poverty rate has decreased by 16.02% over the past five years, data indicates that 45,805 households (57%) are at risk of economic insecurity based on household incomes and the region's cost of living. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has further complicated matters with more than 15% of the region's households being impacted by a loss of employment at some point during the past year.

Program Description:

The Community Services Program, funded solely by CSBG, will provide assistance to households with an income level below 200% of the nationally recognized poverty level that are willing and able to work. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, and word of mouth. Customer demographics, services, and outcomes will be tracked in the AR4CA database. A team of five staff members will be dedicated to the program.

Activities:

- ☑ Case Management
- ☑ Budget Counseling
- ☑ Employment Counseling
- ☑ Employment Supplies
- ☑ Education/Skills Counseling
- ☑ Education/Skills Payments
- ☑ Fuel Cards
- ☑ Childcare Payments
- ☑ Housing Payments
- ☑ Utility Payments

03

Strategies

How will we achieve our goals and fulfill our purpose?

Getting Ahead Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Youth lack the skills necessary to secure employment*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Youth obtain the skills necessary to secure employment*

Estimated Success: *8 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Program Certificate*

Department: *Community Services*

Outputs:

☑ **Education/Skills Counseling**

Verification of Need:

An estimated 25,555 adults in the region lack a high school education. According to the Department of Labor, these individuals are more likely to be unemployed and, those who do secure employment often earn lower wages. Although the current graduation rate (87.08%) is higher than the state and national averages only slightly more than half of the region's youth demonstrated adequate proficiencies in Math and English with 19% of all graduating seniors meeting ACT benchmarks that demonstrate college readiness.

Program Description:

The Getting Ahead program, funded by the Community Services Block Grant, will provide low-income youth (high school aged) with services specifically designed to develop skills that will help them to secure employment as they approach adulthood. Customer data will be tracked on spreadsheets by CSBG staff.

Service Area:

Yadkin

Head Start Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Children are not ready for school*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Children are ready for school*

Estimated Success: *347 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Educational Evaluations, School Enrollment*

Department: *Head Start*

Activities:

☑ **Education Services**

☑ **Health Services**

☑ **Family Development Services**

Verification of Need:

There are 9,722 young children residing in the area served by the organization and only 5,168 childcare slots, leaving an estimated 4,554 children with no childcare access due to a lack of infrastructure. For the 2,422 of these children living in homes that meet the official poverty definition, research indicates that the inclusion of educational services, ensuring preparation for Kindergarten, is the brightest hope for breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty.

Program Description:

The Head Start Program will assist young children (ages 3-5) who are in poverty or categorically eligible to build a strong educational foundation, overcome health barriers, and establish a supportive family environment. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, word of mouth, and community advertisement. Customer data will be tracked in the Child Plus data system. Contributing fund sources will include Federal Head Start, North Carolina Pre-K, CACFP, non-federal share, and county/local funds. A team of 68 staff members will be dedicated to the project.

Migrant Head Start Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Migrant children are not ready for school*

☑ **School Readiness Activities**

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

☑ **Health Services**

Success Measure: *Migrant children are ready for school*

☑ **Family Development Services**

Estimated Success: 39 per year

Measurement Tool: *Educational Evaluations, School Enrollment*

Department: *Head Start*

Verification of Need:

There are 1,027 Hispanic households with young children residing in the area served by the organization, 399 of which meet the officially recognized definition of poverty. With limited childcare opportunities in the community these families are often disadvantaged due to social isolation and language barriers. Further, research conducted by the Urban Institute indicates that inclusion of educational services, ensuring preparation for Kindergarten, is the brightest hope for breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty.

It should be noted that a reduction in migrant farmworkers over the past five years have reduced the customer pool for this program. Agency leaders and the governing body will continue to monitor the data trends to determine if the organization should continue operations or enroll these children in the regular Head Start program.

Program Description:

The Migrant Head Start Program will assist young children (ages birth-5) from migrant/seasonal families who are in poverty or categorically eligible to build a strong educational foundation, overcome health barriers, and establish a supportive family environment. Customers will be identified through partner referrals and community advertisement. Customer data will be tracked in the Child Plus data system. Supporting fund sources will include East Coast Migrant Head Start Project Funds, CACFP, and local donations . A team of 20-25 staff members will be dedicated to the project.

Service Area:

Davie, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin

Transportation Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals lack transportation*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Individuals obtain transportation*

Estimated Success: *1,711 rides per year*

Measurement Tool: *Program Records*

Department: *Transportation*

Activities:

☑ **Transportation Services (Rides)**

Verification of Need:

The most recently completed Community Needs Assessment indicates that an estimated 3,852 of the region's households do not own a vehicle. Not only can this present a barrier for households needing access to food, healthcare, and other basic necessities, able-bodied individuals with transportation barriers are limited in their ability to secure employment and improve qualifications that could lead to the establishment of more meaningful employment.

Program Description:

The transportation program will provide a variety of transit services to groups and individuals in Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals and word of mouth. Although services will be provided to individuals in all income brackets for a small fee, certain fund sources (ROAP, 5310, 5311) will offer subsidized services to veterans, elderly, and disabled individuals. Customer data will be tracked in CTS TripMaster with services provided by a team of 54 staff members.

Weatherization Assistance Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Families reside in homes with health/safety concerns*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Families experience an improvement in the health/safety of their homes*

Estimated Success: *70 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Pre/Post Home Evaluations*

Department: *Weatherization*

Activities:

☑ Home Repairs

Verification of Need:

Although the region has a surplus of 12,465 housing units data indicates that 20,475 of these units have substandard conditions nearly half (9,935) of which are severe. Community members reported that the most common conditions included leaking/sagging roofs, broken windows/doors, inadequate insulation, inadequate heating units, holes in walls/ceilings/floors, missing siding, and rodent/insect infestations. Not only can these conditions contribute to health concerns they often lead to increased energy costs. On average utility bills in North Carolina are more than $400 per month.

Program Description:

The Weatherization Assistance Program will be used to assist low-income households (<200% poverty), particularly the elderly and disabled, overcome the high cost of energy and improve the condition of their homes through energy efficiency and healthy homes measures. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, word of mouth, social media, and other community outreach efforts. Customer data will be tracked in the AR4CA data system. The program will be supported through state Weatherization, Healthy Homes, and Duke Energy fund sources and operated by a team of 8 staff members.

Service Area:

Davie, Rowan, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin

Grace's Closet (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals lack clothing*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Individuals obtain clothing*

Estimated Success: *7,131 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Program Logs*

Department: *Grace's Closet*

Activities:

☑ **Clothing Goods Distribution**

Verification of Need:

29,546 members of the local population (15.1%) are considered to be living in poverty based on the nationally recognized definition. As these individuals are focusing resources on housing, utility, medical, and nutritional needs, community members report that these individuals are wearing the same outfit multiple days in a row and/or wearing seasonally inappropriate items. Overall, clothing was ranked as the number 8 need experienced by low-income individuals in the region.

Program Description:

Grace's Closet, located in the LH Jones Family Resource Center, will provide clothing to individuals in need. Funded by donations, the program will not require participants to verify that they are living in poverty in order to be assisted. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, and word of mouth. The program is fully operated by volunteers and Urban League Workers.

LH Jones Family Resource Center (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals and families lack basic needs*

Strategic Goal: *Individuals and families are stable and achieve economic security*

Success Measure: *Individuals obtain basic needs*

Estimated Success: *75,506 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Program Rosters, Partner Reports*

Department: *LH Jones Family Resource Center*

Verification of Need:

29,546 members of the local population (15.1%) are considered to be living in poverty based on the nationally recognized definition. Although poverty may impact every household in a different way, regional survey data indicates that the most common concerns include the ability to secure/maintain (1) safe and affordable housing, (2) physical healthcare, (3) nutritious foods, (4) mental healthcare, (5) electricity, (6) safety from violence/abuse, (7) heat, (8) clothing, and (9) water.

Program Description:

YVEDDI's LH Jones Family Resource Center will be utilized to address a variety of community needs through the housing of like-minded service organizations. Programs will be offered on a regular basis to improve health and wellness, education, recreation, socialization, and volunteerism. Program eligibility will vary based on the individual requirements of each occupant. A team of 3 staff members will be dedicated to the project with customer data tracked on spreadsheets (may contain duplications). The program will be supported by cost sharing and county support.

Occupants:

- ✓ YVEDDI CSBG
- ✓ YVEDDI Head Start/Pre-K
- ✓ YVEDDI RSVP
- ✓ YVEDDI Senior Services
- ✓ YVEDDI Senior Center
- ✓ YVEDDI Grace's Closet
- ✓ Auxiliary & Faith Deliverance for Jesus
- ✓ Faith Deliverance for Jesus
- ✓ JJ Jones Alumni Association
- ✓ NexGen
- ✓ Yokefellow Christian Ministries

Service Area:

Surry

Domestic Violence Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals reside in unsafe environments*

Strategic Goal: *Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment*

Success Measure: *Individuals escape unsafe environments*

Estimated Success: *198 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Staff Evaluation, Customer Statement*

Department: *Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault*

Activities:

- ✓ **Information**
- ✓ **Advocacy**
- ✓ **Transportation**
- ✓ **Counseling**
- ✓ **Court Advocacy**
- ✓ **Rent Assistance**
- ✓ **Utility Assistance**

Verification of Need:

In 2014, a study conducted by the University of North Carolina estimated that 2% of the state's population experiences domestic violence each year. Among these, 97% of these victims reported emotional abuse, with 71% stating that they had been physically abused, 31% reporting financial abuse, 18% reporting technological abuse, and 13% being abused sexually. A child was involved in nearly half of all situations (47.5%). In the service area, a total of 2,387 individuals reported that they had been abused during 2018, 4 of which lead to death.

Program Description:

The Domestic Violence Program, funded by the North Carolina Council for Women and Youth Involvement, FVPSA, the Governor's Crime Commission, United Fund, and county monies, is designed to help end the cycle of violence through public awareness efforts and preventative measures focused on helping victims escape unsafe/unhealthy home environments. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, and word of mouth. A team of 6 staff members will be dedicated to the project with customer data is tracked in the CAP60 client tracking software. Secondary indicators of success include (1) the number of individuals who obtain emergency shelter and (2) the number of individuals who obtain a living-wage equivalent income.

Service Area:

Davie, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin

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Sexual Assault Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Individuals reside in unsafe environments*

Strategic Goal: *Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment*

Success Measure: *Individuals escape unsafe environments*

Estimated Success: *21 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Staff Evaluation, Customer Statement*

Department: *Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault*

Activities:

- ☑ Information
- ☑ Advocacy
- ☑ Transportation
- ☑ Counseling
- ☑ Court Advocacy
- ☑ Rent Assistance
- ☑ Utility Assistance

Verification of Need:

In 2014, a study conducted by the University of North Carolina estimated that 2% of the state's population experiences domestic violence each year. Among these, 97% of these victims reported emotional abuse, with 71% stating that they had been physically abused, 31% reporting financial abuse, 18% reporting technological abuse, and 13% being abused sexually. A child was involved in nearly half of all situations (47.5%). In the service area, a total of 2,387 individuals reported that they had been abused during 2018, 4 of which lead to death.

Program Description:

The agency's Sexual Assault Program is designed to help individuals experiencing sexual assault escape violence and begin the healing process through advocacy and support services. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, word-of-mouth, and community outreach. Program funding will be provided by the North Carolina Council for Women and Youth Involvement, FVPSA, The Governor's Crime Commission, United Funds, and county monies. A team of 6 staff members will be dedicated to the project with customer progress documented in the CAP60 client tracking system.

Service Area:

Davie, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin

Senior Services Program (F)

Problem Addressed: *Seniors have a heightened risk of poor to fair health*

Strategic Goal: *Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment*

Success Measure: *Seniors maintain independent wellness*

Estimated Success: *4,500 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Staff Evaluation, Customer Statement*

Department: *Senior Services*

Activities:

- ✓ Senior Centers
- ✓ Meals on Wheels
- ✓ Congregate Meals
- ✓ Legal Advocacy
- ✓ Senior General Transportation
- ✓ Senior Medical Transportation
- ✓ RSVP

Verification of Need:

Over the past five years, the number of senior citizens (age 65+) has increased by 11.6% from 35,138 to 38,808 individuals. This migration has resulted in an increase of 4.07% in the median age during the same time period. Among these, an estimated 3,528 seniors had incomes below the nationally recognized poverty level, representing 9.4% of the senior population. These individuals often live on fixed incomes and are more likely to experience health problems, food insecurity, social isolation, and other factors that impact quality of life.

Program Description:

The program will serve individuals who are over the age of 50. While the program will not require participants to meet any income guidelines, some components may require older age requirements than others. Customers will be identified through internal/external referrals, social media, community outreach, and word of mouth. The program will be supported by the Older American's Act, United Fund of Surry, Yadkin County United Fund, Yadkin Valley United Fund, state/local funds, consumer contributions, fundraisers, and other donations. A team of 12 staff members will be dedicated to the project, with customer progress tracked in the NCID and ServeTracker databases. Secondary indicators of success will include (1) the number of seniors who obtain food, (2) the number of seniors to obtain transportation, (3) the number of seniors who obtain access to medical care, and (4) the number of seniors who increase engagement in the community.

Weatherization Initiative (C)

☑ Home Repairs

Problem Addressed: *Housing units in the community have health/safety concerns*

Strategic Goal: *Communities are healthy and offer economic opportunity*

Success Measure: *The condition of the community's housing units is improved*

Estimated Success: *70 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Pre/Post Home Evaluations*

Department: *Weatherization*

Verification of Need:

Data indicates that 20,475 of the 92,199 housing units available in the region (22%) have at least one substandard condition, 9,935 of which (10.78%) had at least one severe substandard condition. Community members explained that the greatest conditions included sagging/leaking roofs, broken windows/doors, inadequate insulation, holes in walls/ceilings/floors, missing siding, and insect/rodent infestation.

Program Description:

The Weatherization Initiative is designed to improve the quality of the community's housing units through energy efficiency and home health repairs. Housing units will be identified through applications submitted by low-income households. A team of 8 staff members will be dedicated to the project with success monitored in the AR4CA data system. The initiative will be supported by state Weatherization funds, Healthy Homes, and Duke Energy.

Service Area:

Davie, Rowan, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin

Transportation Initiative (C)

Problem Addressed: *The community lacks adequate public transportation resources*

Strategic Goal: *Communities are healthy and offer economic opportunity*

Success Measure: *Communities experience an increase in transportation resources*

Estimated Success: *4 per year*

Measurement Tool: *Initiative Reports*

Department: *Transportation*

Verification of Need:

The most recently completed Community Needs Assessment indicates that an estimated 3,852 of the region's households do not own a vehicle. Not only can this present a barrier for households needing access to food, healthcare, and other basic necessities, able-bodied individuals with transportation barriers are limited in their ability to secure employment and improve qualifications that could lead to the establishment of more meaningful employment. Although the organization currently operates the program, data indicates that discontinuance of this strategy would negatively impact the community, thus verifying an ongoing need.

Program Description:

The transportation initiative is designed to improve the public transportation infrastructure in Davie, Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin counties. A team of 54 staff members will be dedicated to the project, with the initiatives scope of success tracked in the CTS TripMaster software.

Board Development Initiative (A)

Problem Addressed: *Some members of the governing body are not fully engaged*

Strategic Goal: *The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security*

Success Measure: *The organization experiences an increase in board engagement*

Measurement Tool: *Board Minutes, Board Evaluations*

Department: *Administration*

Activities:

- ✓ **Develop a Board Self-Assessment**
- ✓ **Develop a Board Training Plan**
- ✓ **Schedule a Board Retreat**

Verification of Need:
The most recently completed SWOT analysis identified two vacancies in the organization's governing body. With one additional member considering retirement it is important for the existing body to review structural requirements and ensure that all mandates are considered during recruitment for these positions.

Initiative Description:
The Executive Director will work with members of the governing body to identify any areas in which they feel less than confident in their ability to appropriately oversee and direct the operations of the organization. Once a full understanding of these areas is identified a training plan will be strategically developed to boost member confidence and engagement.

Staff Retention Initiative (A)

Problem Addressed: *Several agency programs were identified as having high turnover rates*

Strategic Goal: *The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security*

Success Measure: *The organization experiences an increase in staff retention*

Measurement Tool: *Personnel Records*

Department: *Administration*

Activities:

☑ **Schedule Leadership Meeting**

☑ **Develop/Disseminate Surveys**

☑ **Schedule Staff Meeting**

Verification of Need:

The recently completed SWOT analysis found that several of the agency's programs suffered from staff shortages, at least partially attributed to a high turnover rate. Although a strong majority of the staff members participating in the research explained that they were confident in their understanding and ability to complete their required duties, many explained that they felt underpaid and had insufficient technology to do their jobs effectively.

Initiative Description:

The agency's leadership team, in coordination with the Executive Director, will schedule a meeting to discuss the scope of the problem. Surveys will be developed and disseminated to team members in each department to identify potential morale concerns. Once evaluated, the leadership team will follow up with a staff meeting to discuss opportunities to improve morale and increase retention.

Data Consolidation Initiative (A)

Problem Addressed: *The organization is currently unable to produce agency-wide unduplicated data*

Strategic Goal: *The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security*

Success Measure: *The organization produces agency-wide unduplicated data*

Measurement Tool: *Agency Reports*

Department: *Administration*

Activities:

- ☑ **Create Software List**
- ☑ **Identify Reporting/Analysis Needs**
- ☑ **Research Software/API Solutions**
- ☑ **Release RFP**

Verification of Need:

While it is understood that the agency operates a variety of fund sources that require customer data to be tracked in separate systems producing an unduplicated count of customers served by the entirety of an organization, as well as each program operated under its auspices, it is necessary to fully understand its effectiveness. Further, guidance from the National Association of State Community Services Programs (NASCSP) clearly states the expectation of every Community Action Agency to produce unduplicated data for the CSBG Annual Report.

Initiative Description:

The agency's leadership team will develop a list of all software systems used by the organization to track customer demographics, services, and outcomes and the current reporting/analysis needs of the organization. This will be followed by research of existing software systems and data bridges (APIs). Once the needs are identified they will be used to develop a Request For Proposals that will be released and published to identified software developers.

Implementation

How will the plan be put into action?

Governance

The organization is currently governed by a 24-member Board of Directors equally representing (1) low-income individuals who have a first-hand understanding of the problems of poverty, (2) public officials with expertise in public relations, meetings, administration, funding, and fiscal affairs, and (3) members from the private sector who can provide specialized business expertise and other resources. In accordance with the Head Start Act and best practices, the governing body includes financial experts, a licensed attorney, current or present Head Start parents, and experts in early childhood education.

Board responsibilities include (1) regular evaluation and (re)adoption/modification of the organization's mission, (2) participation in community assessment projects, (3) participation in the development and approval of the agency's strategic plan, (4) review and approval of the agency's Community Action Plan, (5) review and approval of funding proposals, (5) financial oversight, (6) fundraising, (7) compliance/risk oversight, (8) program performance monitoring, (8) recruitment and evaluation of the Executive Director, (9) advocacy for the agency to public officials, local businesses, and members of the community, and (10) other elements associated with the duties of care, loyalty, and obedience.

During this cycle, board members provided valuable feedback associated with community needs and resources, participated in pre-planning surveys, and guided the selection of strategies in this plan. As the plan is implemented over the next three years, the board has committed to maintaining a constant awareness of the organization's financial viability, potential risks, and progress meeting established goals associated with each strategy through reports issued by the Executive Director and delegated staff persons at regularly scheduled meetings. Adjustments to the plan will be made, as necessary, to ensure the organization has the greatest opportunity for success based on the ever-changing needs of the community and resource availability.

Administration

The organization's Executive Director will be ultimately responsible for implementation of the plan, with various components delegated to experts in finance, human resources, and program operations. Reports associated with organizational operations and each component of the plan will be reviewed by the Executive Director on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance and monitor progress. These reports will be presented to the governing body at regularly scheduled meetings. The Executive Director will be supported by the Executive Assistant and Communications Specialist.

Oversight

Implementation of the plan will be monitored by the Finance Director, HR Director, and a team of seven Program Directors. These individuals will ensure that all compliance requirements are met, provide technical support to the implementation team, monitor performance targets, and ensure that agency administrators and the governing body maintain a constant awareness of accomplishments and concerns.

Implementation

Agency strategies will be implemented and administered by a team of 127 full-time and 33 part-time staff members assigned to Community Services (5), Head Start (68), Migrant Head Start (4), Domestic Violence (6), Senior Services (13), Transportation (54), Weatherization (8), and the Family Resource Center (3). Specialized certifications include Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer, Nationally Certified ROMA Implementer, Getting Ahead, Bridges Out of Poverty, Trauma Informed Care, Sarbanes-Oxley, Sigma Greenbelt, B-K Licensure, Family Services Credentials, BPI Home Energy Professional, Quality Control Inspector, Duct Blaster, Lead Based Paint, Certified Public Accountant, CPR/First Aid, Fire Extinguisher/Safety, CLASS, North Carolina Driver's License, DOT Physical, Defensive Driving, Passenger Assistance Service and Safety (PASS), Defensive Driver Trainer, Certified Senior Center Managers, and PASS Trainer.

Members of the implementation team will be given access to the agency's Strategic Plan, Community Action Plan, individuals program plans as relevant to their position, along with training and information necessary for them to successfully fulfill the expectations associated with their positions.

Customer data will be entered into the appropriate program's system. This includes AR4CA (CSBG, Weatherization), Child Plus (Head Start, Migrant Head Start), CTS TripMaster (Transportation), CAP60 (DV/SA), ARMS (Senior Services), ServTracker (Senior Services), and on spreadsheets (Getting Ahead, Grace's Closet, LH Jones FRC). Customer demographics, services, and outcomes are documented as determined appropriate according to each of the agency's fund source requirements. Although the organization cannot currently generate unduplicated data the current plan includes an agency-level strategy that is focused in ensuring this becomes a reality over the next three-years.

Capital & Financial Resources

Implementation of the plan will require the organization to dedicate an estimated $12,000,000 to agency operations and program operations from Federal ($5,800,000), State ($1,700,000), Local ($500,000), and Private/Other ($4,000,000) resources. These resources will support operations in 11 agency-owned buildings and use of 95 agency-owned vehicles. It should be noted that 61 of these vehicles are NCDOT vans used by the transportation program.

Projected Supporting Fund Sources:

- AmeriCorps
- Contract Revenues
- County of Stokes
- County of Surry
- County of Yadkin
- East Coast Migrant Head Start Project
- Federal Transit Administration
- Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults
- Meals on Wheels of America
- National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services
- North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten
- North Carolina Council for Women
- North Carolina Department of Crime Control/Governor's Crime Commission
- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- North Carolina Department of Insurance

- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- North Carolina Department of Aging and Adult Services
- North Caroling Department of Environmental Quality
- Nutrition Services Incentive Program
- Family Resource Center Occupant Agencies/Organizations
- Partners Behavioral Health Management
- Participant Contributions
- Piedmont Triad Regional Council
- United Fund of Stokes County
- United Fund of Surry County
- User Fees
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- USDA Childcare and Adult Food Programs
- Yadkin County United Fund
- Yadkin Valley United Fund

Although the organization's strategies include a comprehensive approach supported by a team of highly experienced and dedicated staff members, the agency's leadership team understands that no single organization or entity has the ability to address every need/barrier independently. For this reason, the organization embraces both internal and external relationships to strategically achieve its goals and fulfill its purpose. While the number of partners associated with implementation of the plan are too numerous to list, nearly 50 organizations are officially engaged in efforts of this plan through Memoranda of Understanding.

Strategic Partnerships

- Boonville Baptist Church
- Boonville Public Library
- Boonville First United Presbyterian Church
- Cato's
- The Children's Center
- Choose Life
- Danbury Public Library
- Davie County Public Library
- Davie County Schools
- Davie and Yadkin Cooperative Extension Service
- Divine Redeemer Catholic Church
- Dobson Community Library
- Elkin City Schools
- Elkin City School Mckinney-Vento Liaison
- Elkin Public Library
- Goodwill Career Center
- Jonesville Public Library
- King Outreach Ministry
- King Public Library
- Mount Airy Public Library
- Mount Airy City Schools
- Mount Airy City Schools Mckinney-Vento Liaison
- North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solution
- Parkwood Eye Center
- Piedmont Triad Regional Council
- Respiratory Care Partners
- SCAN Surry and Stokes Counties
- SCC
- Smart Start of Davie County
- Smart Start of Yadkin County
- Smile Starters
- Southern Dental Associates
- Stokes County Department of Social Services
- Stokes County Partnership for Young Children Smart Start
- Stokes County Schools
- Stokes County School System Mckinney-Vento Liaison
- Stokes Partnership for Children

- Surry Community College
- Surry County Department of Social Services
- Surry CountyEarly Childhood Partnership, Inc.
- Surry County Elink Youth Program Armfield Grant, Mount Airy Schools
- Surry County Schools
- Surry County Cooperative Extension Services
- Surry County Early Childhood Partnership, Inc.
- Tri-County Christian Ministries
- Universal Pre-K
- Upper Yadkin Valley Habitat for Humanity
- Wheels 4 Hope
- Winston Salem CDSA
- Yadkin County Chamber of Commerce
- Yadkin County Department of Social Services
- Yadkin County Public Library
- Yadkin County Schools
- Yadkin Vision Center
- YMCA
- YMCA Davie County
- YMCA Yadkinville

Storytelling

How will we solicit support from the community?

Community Organizations & Businesses
The organization will use social media, press releases, the agency website, the agency's Annual Report, and participation in collaborative meetings to communicate information concerning agency programs (customer base, qualifications, success measures, outcomes, and agency needs) in an effort to increase/strengthen partnerships, prevent duplications, and increase resources.

The General Population
The organization will use social media, press releases, the agency website, and the agency's Annual Report to communicate information concerning community needs and agency programs (customer base, success measures, outcomes, and agency needs) to increase public awareness and solicit community engagement through donations/volunteerism.

Local Government Officials
The organization will use social media, press releases, the agency website, and the agency's Annual Report to communicate information concerning agency programs (customer base, success measures, outcomes, and agency needs) in an effort to increase/strengthen political support, increase funding security, and secure additional resources.

Low-Income Residents
The organization will use social media, press releases, outreach materials, the agency website, advertisements on transit buses, and the agency's Annual Report to communicate information concerning agency programs (eligibility requirements, success measures, outcomes, and agency needs) to ensure populations in need are aware of resources available to assist them and opportunities to invest in the community.

Standard 4.1: The governing board has reviewed the organization's mission statement within the past 5 years.

The Planning Committee reviewed the organization's mission statement to ensure it (1) addresses poverty, (2) effectively communicates the agency's purpose, and (3) includes the four basic ROMA elements, and (4) to ensure all strategies included in this plan are in alignment with the mission. The planning committee recommended that the governing body should re-adopt the existing mission statement with no changes.

Standard 4.2: The organization's Community Action Plan is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the Community Assessment.

The Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for the Community Action Plan, documenting the primary outcomes that the organization will use to measure success in the removal of barriers preventing low-income individuals from moving out of poverty. Action plans, created in coordination with this document will be used to allow administrators to track progress in the achievement of these goals and outcomes. A list of each strategy, along with the established success measures, can be found in section 3 of this document.

Standard 4.3: The organization's Community Action Plan and Strategic Plan document the continuous use of the ROMA Cycle or comparable system. In addition, the organization documents having used the services of a ROMA Certified Trainer or equivalent to assist in implementation.

Assessment
The organization completed a Community Needs Assessment in FY 2021 to identify personal and infrastructural barriers that prevent individuals from increasing self-sufficiency and their quality of life.

A SWOT Analysis was later conducted in coordination with the development of the agency's strategic plan which included a review of organizational documents, audits, and surveys collected from agency team members, the governing body, community members, and partners. All data was reviewed with the planning committee to identify capacity and resource barriers that could potentially hinder fulfillment of the organization's purpose.

Planning
Development of the plan included review/re-adoption of the agency's mission statement, establishment of goals, and identification of objectives/strategies that will guide the organization's direction over the next three years. All action included in the plan was based on data obtained during the assessment phase of the ROMA Cycle.

Implementation
Action Plans, complete with integrated scorecards, were developed in coordination with the agency's strategic plan. These documents will provide leaders with the ability to easily track progress in the fulfillment of its purpose.

Results
Program data will be reviewed by the Program Operations leadership team on a monthly basis to identify organizational achievements and prevent unexpected performance targeting concerns. Reports will be submitted to program funders on a monthly basis and reviewed by the governing body at every regularly scheduled meeting. Agency-wide annual reports will be used to communicate activities and achievements to funders, partners, and community members.

Evaluation
Data will be evaluated on an annual basis to identify the success of each strategy based on a comparison of actual achievement of the primary outcome with performance targets, the cost of each strategy, the cost of each customer served by each strategy, the cost for each successful customer, and secondary outcomes achieved.

07

Compliance

Are we meeting all of our Organizational Standards mandates?

Standard 6.1: The organization has an agency-wide strategic plan that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.

The most recent strategic plan was completed in Fiscal Year 2021, three years after the previous document was approved. A draft version of the plan was presented to the full Board of Directors and approved to guide the organization over the next three years. An official review of the document will be conducted by the Board of Directors at the end of each year. When necessary this review will be accompanied by revisions to the plan and/or reallocation of organizational resources. Each review will be documented in official minutes.

Standard 6.2: The approved strategic plan addresses the reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or the empowerment of people with low-incomes to become self-sufficient.

The Community Services Program is specifically designed to empower people with low-incomes to become self-sufficient through the direct provision of case management services. The Weatherization Initiative and Transportation Initiative were designed to revitalize low-income communities, removing infrastructural barriers that prevent movement out of poverty. Both the Head Start and Migrant Head Start Programs are focused on reducing the number of people in poverty over a long-term period by focusing resources on preparing children for school as a first step in breaking the cycle of poverty.

Standard 6.3: The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.

The organization adopted four goals that represent the Family (F) and Agency (A) levels.

(1) Individuals and families with low-incomes are stable and achieve economic security (F)
(2) Vulnerable populations maintain a safe and healthy environment (F)
(3) Communities where people live are healthy and offer economic opportunity (C)
(4) The agency is compliant and uses resources efficiently to promote economic security (A)

Standard 6.4: Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the Community Assessment, is included in the Strategic Planning process.

Results of customer satisfaction surveys collected during Community Needs Assessment research were documented in the SWOT analysis and reviewed as a part of the planning process. One strategy, the Operational Process Initiative, was partially developed in response to feedback obtained from these surveys.

Standard 6.5: The governing board has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan within the past 12 months.

Although the governing body will monitor the progress of planned achievements on an ongoing basis an official review of the document will be conducted at the end of each year. When necessary this review will be accompanied by revisions to the plan and/or reallocation or organizational resources. The review will be documented in official minutes and will be accompanied by a vote approving the Community Action Plan for the following year.